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United Nations Population Award 2008

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund on the United Nations Population Award, established by the Assembly in its resolution 36/201. The report covers 2008 and was prepared in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 1982/112.

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Report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund on the United Nations Population Award (2008)

I. Introduction

1. On 17 December 1981, the General Assembly adopted resolution 36/201, entitled "Establishment of the United Nations Population Award". The Award is presented annually to an individual or individuals, to an institution or institutions, or to any combination thereof for the most outstanding contribution to increasing awareness of population questions or to finding solutions to them.

2. The laureate is selected by the Committee for the United Nations Population Award, which is composed of representatives of 10 States Members of the United Nations, elected by the Economic and Social Council for a period of three years

3. In decision 41/445, the General Assembly amended article 2, paragraph 1, of the regulations governing the United Nations Population Award (resolution 36/201, annex), so that an individual and an institution could share the Award.

4. In decision 1987/129, the Economic and Social Council amended the rules of procedure of the Committee for the United Nations Population Award accordingly.

5. The current elected members of the Committee are Algeria, Bangladesh, the Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Malaysia, Peru, Sweden and the United Republic of Tanzania.

6. During its first regular meeting, on 18 January 2008, the Committee re-elected Anders Lidén (Sweden) as Chairperson for 2008.

II. United Nations Population Award 2008

7. The Committee received 18 nominations from qualified nominators for the 2008 Award. Of these, 11 were for the individual category and 7 were for the institutional category. On 4 March 2008, in accordance with the mandate given to it by the General Assembly, and after a thorough review of the nominations, the Committee selected Dame Billie Miller of Barbados in the individual category and Family Care International of the United States of America in the institutional category.

8. The Committee selected Dame Billie Miller in recognition of her outstanding work as an advocate, policymaker, agent of change and role model for policies on gender and on sexual and reproductive health, including family planning, and for her success in building global understanding and support for achieving universal access to reproductive health. She has had a brilliant political career, beginning in the early 1970s. An attorney by profession, she was elected to Parliament in 1976, and was the first woman to be appointed as a minister in Barbados. She held ministerial portfolios in health and national insurance, education and culture, foreign affairs and international business, and tourism and international transport. She served as leader of opposition business in the Senate of Barbados, leader of the House of Assembly and was appointed Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1994. Dame Miller also gained international recognition as a

leader on population and gender issues. In 2004, during its 50th anniversary celebrations, the International Planned Parenthood Federation (western hemisphere region) honoured Dame Miller for her lifelong contribution to the discussion of sexual and reproductive health. In 2005, at the invitation of the Inter-American Development Bank, she delivered an address entitled "Effective policies: removing obstacles to achieve the Millennium Development Goals", promoting social inclusion, in which she maintained that the Millennium Development Goals could not be achieved without full consideration of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

9. Dame Miller has exercised great influence in the debates and work of many intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. She served as chair of the Non-Governmental Organization Planning Committee for the International Conference on Population and Development, president of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (western hemisphere region), president of the Board of Directors of the Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development for the Caribbean and Latin America, and chair of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. Dame Miller was also an adviser to the Inter-American Dialogue Organization and a member of the United Nations Population Fund Advisory Panel on Women.

10. The Committee for the United Nations Population Award selected Family Care International in recognition of its achievements in building a global platform and partnership to end maternal mortality and to provide assistance for women at risk in developing countries, particularly in Africa, by promoting sexual and reproductive health for adolescents, ensuring safe motherhood and preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS.

11. Family Care International was established as an international non-governmental organization in New York in 1986, in response to data collected from surveys in the early 1980s indicating that maternal mortality was one of the leading causes of death in women in their reproductive years in the developing world. It has eight field offices in Africa and Latin America and 56 staff members, and operates with an annual budget of approximately $5 million, with projects in 22 countries.

12. The programme of work of Family Care International is organized around three areas: promoting sexual and reproductive health for adolescents; ensuring safe motherhood; and preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS. It has a wide range of activities, at the local through international levels. Some programmes take place at the grass-roots level, and the lessons learned are then used as guidelines to design larger projects. The knowledge, experience and expertise accumulated through this approach are discussed at national and international funding and policy debates, as well as at international events on population issues. For instance, during the International Conference on Population and Development, Family Care International recruited local non-governmental organizations in different countries to be a part of national delegations. This enabled the organizations to play advocacy roles, create a common front on specific issues and build consensus. To date, Family Care International has organized 16 regional and international conferences, has worked with more than 175 partners around the world and has produced outstanding educational and informational materials that have been widely disseminated. In October 2007, it co-organized the "Women Deliver" conference in London, which

reframed maternal health as a development issue. The conference had 2,000 participants from 110 countries, including cabinet ministers and parliamentarians, and generated a new global commitment to the issues of maternal mortality and safe motherhood.

13. Among the other achievements of Family Care International is the establishment in 1987 of the Safe Motherhood Inter-Agency Group, which brings together a number of international organizations, including the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Health Organization, the World Bank, the International Planned Parenthood Federation and the Population Council, with Family Care International serving as the secretariat. The Inter-Agency Group provides policy support and disseminates best practices and other information among policymakers and programme managers.

III. Financial matters

14. As of 31 December 2007, the Trust Fund for the United Nations Population Award had a total fund balance of $1,777,604.96. Interest income in 2007 was $40,255.41. Expenditures in 2008, including prizes given to the two laureates, totalled $74,617.74.